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From: Marlisenb@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 01, 2003 2:55 PM
To: CampDayBreakEA@mvr02.usace.army.mil
Subject: Camp Day Break EA Comments

TO: US Army Corps of Engineers
FR: **Helen M. Lisenbee**
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DA: January 1, 2003

RE: Environmental Assessment of Proposed Lease at Coralville Lake - Comments

Dear Sirs:

I have been a resident of North Liberty for 31 years and a resident on Coralville Lake for 8 years. At that time I have witnessed growth, expansion, and enhancements to the city of North Liberty and our surrounding community. These changes have been of direct benefit to residents, the community, and the state of Iowa. As a concerned citizen of North Liberty, my comments are submitted in more of a general nature as I understand specific substantive comments have been advanced in detail by more knowledgeable and informed residents. (I have been out of state for extended periods caring for an aging parent.) Also, media coverage has been less than adequate. It has been more of a general nature and not as detailed as would be desirable for all civic minded individuals to completely understand and realize the full impact of the youth camp project.

On March 26, Lt. General Robert Flowers announced to the US Army Corps of Engineers the Environmental Operating Principles as a guide to the Corps in all of its works. Operating Principle #7 states:

"Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities, listen to them actively, and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment."

Q. #1. Mr. Flowers Principle #7 should be taken to heart. The North Liberty City planners have successfully practiced this principle when making decisions affecting the community. Comprehensive information and options were outlined in the form of a survey, views and opinions solicited, the results evaluated, differences resolved, and a final plan of action adopted. Residents had a voice in some broad city revisions. The youth camp is of a serious and sensitive nature as well. Why couldn't a similar plan have been initiated by the Corps? In this regard, there are 2 obvious perspectives. They include those of the Corps and those of the community. Views of the common consensus is that the Corps wishes are being imposed on the community without regard to the residents. Feelings have surfaced which include a negative image and lack of confidence in the Corps. The numbers are large and these feelings will not go away with time. "It is not always what you do, but HOW you do it." This really feels like the Corps has taken a bulldozer approach. 32-2

Q. #2. Excerpt: "search for innovative win-win solutions" - Is this a win-win solution when the majority of residents in the community and across the country have expressed opposing views to the installation of this youth camp in our community? It seems to me there is only one winner in this solution and it is not the residents of North Liberty or our community. 7-2

33-3

Q. #3 Excerpt: "find innovative win-win solutions to the nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment." Mr. Flowers operating principle is right on target. The installation of a youth camp of this nature in "America's Heartland" is a nation's problem and should be submitted for review and approval by a higher authority than this one lone branch of the Corps of Engineers. Are there plans to submit this lease request to a higher authority for review and approval?

7-3

Q. #4. Excerpt: "a nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment." - How can it be assumed this camp will protect and enhance the environment when a portion of the woods will be destroyed, the wild life disrupted, and an increase in the use of Coralville Lake eminent? The lake already has a high volume of usage. Additionally, my experience has been that most home owners are not permitted to build boat docks on the lake for their personal use because of the government easement. A few residents located on the lake may have gained a variance in early years which I assume would be an exception to the current regulations. Yet, a variance will be granted to the youth camp to gain access to the lake for water activities. How can the importance of the youth camp override the home owners privileges who have lived on the land bordering the lake for years?

30-1

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7-4

I can see no benefit to the installation of a facility the size and dimension of the youth camp being proposed. The increased road usage, potential tax burden, increased water and Coralville Lake usage, the demand on civil authorities protecting the city, and others will undoubtedly have a rippling affect and become more of a detriment than an advantage to the community. My understanding is that the organization interested in the land for the camp is more of a private secretive group than a community minded organization. If this is the case, their objective will be to occupy the land and possibly make use of the community facilities and shopping areas only, but not actively participate in the goals and activities of the community. I assume they will be relieved of the tax burden also if they are a non profit organization. Is this true? How can this be of benefit to our community, our State, and our Federal Government?

20-5

20-1

Has a full "scope and purpose" of the lease agreement period been established? In the short term, I assume a layout of the land and diagram of the facilities will be (has been) drafted to facilitate the immediate needs of the camp at the onset. However, in the long term, if the camp is successful, how will growth be accommodated? Are there regulations and requirements for the leased period? Additionally, are there restrictions and limitations? Specifically, what is the long term plan and is it drafted in increments (5, 10, 15 years, etc.) Are there any controls? Is there a plan at all?

3-4

I am opposed to the installation of the land being leased to this youth camp organization.

33-5

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my comments, although I feel like it is already a "done deal."